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BA Gets Set for Centennial Celebration

A year-long birthday party is about to begin in Broken Arrow as the city celebrates its first 100 years. The Centennial Celebration will begin on Saturday, Oct. 19, and run through mid-October of 2003.

While the kickoff downtown promises to be one of the biggest one-day events ever in Broken Arrow, it will be only the beginning of a year filled with salutes to the little stop on the railroad tracks between Tulsa and Muskogee which has grown now to the fifth largest city in Oklahoma.

A committee has been meeting regularly for the past two years making preparations for Broken Arrow "birthday party." Their efforts have been supported by donations from businesses, civic organizations, individuals and the City of Broken Arrow.

"When a city grows from under 12,000 in 1970 to more than 80,000 in 2002," said City Manager Michael Kadlecik, "we're certain to have a large percentage of the population with little knowledge of Broken Arrow's history. There may be other cities and towns in the state getting ready to celebrate 100 years, but few can match the growth and accomplishments of our community. It's something in which we should all take a great deal of pride."



Dedication ceremonies will begin on the morning of Oct. 19 with a dedication of Centennial Park at Main and Broadway. At that dedication, a statue commemorating the centennial event will be officially unveiled.

Following that program, a huge parade will be held along Main Street, ending at Central Park. And for the rest of the day, the park will be home to a series of special programs.

"We want this to be a one-of-a-kind birthday party for our city," said John Ayers, Centennial Committee chairman.

Those working on the "party" range from some

of the most "senior" of our senior citizens to some of the youngest of our school children. Many of the activities throughout the year will be brought to life by students -- including a mural at Smitty's Western Wear, a Centennial song and play, an ABC History Book by eighth graders and much more. A book on the history of Broken Arrow is being published. Historical sites throughout the community will be recognized with plaques. A community-wide service co-sponsored by the Broken Arrow Ministerial Alliance will be held Nov. 16 at Rhema Bible Church, starting at 6 p.m. For details of the Centennial, go to the City's web site at www.city.broken-arrow.ok.us.



With their new dress uniforms available, the BA Fire Department Honor Guard has been able to participate in events such as Flag Day. Shown here are (from left) Jeremy Roberts, Kirby Walker, David Meeks, Lee Moody, William Vaughn, Daniel Bush, Charles Misener, John Cockrell and Ron Middleswart.

BA Fire Department Prepared for 9-11 Anniversary

With the first anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks upon us, the Broken Arrow Fire Department is already seeing its impact upon our community.

This year Sept. 11 will fall on a Wednesday, and several churches have already indicated they will be holding special services honoring firefighters and emergency workers. Now boasting an official Honor Guard, the BAFD has been asked to participate in some of those services -- to present the colors as part of the program.

"The department is truly grateful for these expressions of appreciation," said Deputy Fire Chief Greg Neely. "They could not come at a better time. This first commemoration may be a very difficult ordeal for many citizens and members of local emergency response agencies, as the painful memory of the attacks resurface."

Neely was working for the Tulsa Fire Department last September, and has a look at the reaction of citizens from different views.

"Emergency workers from across the country felt an outpouring of appreciation of unprecedented magnitude from the communities they served," he said. "The heroic acts of the emergency response personnel on that day, and in the days to come, etched a picture in the hearts and minds of the public that may never be forgotten. Citizens from all walks of life began experiencing a new-found awareness of the selfless acts that these men and women perform day in and day out."

For firefighters in every corner of the nation and all points in between, Sept. 11 will forever have a special meaning. "The firefighters in Broken Arrow are gearing up physically and emotionally as requests for their presence have already begun from area churches and civic groups," said Neely. That means every time they are called upon to participate in one of those programs, they will be reminded once more of what life has been like since 9-11. But, as they always do, they will answer the call.

Honor Guard Becomes Reality

It all began as a "coffee shop conversation." Now it's a reality: Class A uniforms for the Broken Arrow Fire Department, and an official Honor Guard.

Sadly, it took a national disaster in New York City on Sept. 11 of 2001 to provide the motivation to bring all the pieces of the puzzle together. But now, with the anniversary of that tragedy upon us, the BAFD is able to answer calls from the community for special appearances in proper dress.

Firefighters Daniel Bush, Mike Heisten, Jason Gilkison and Capt. Doug Coates discussed the need for Class A dress uniforms and the Honor Guard over coffee one day a couple of years ago.

"After the events that took place on Sept. 11," explained Bush, "we really saw the need to have (an Honor Guard) in place -- not only for our own brethren, but for our brothers nationwide."

Heisten was credited with doing much of the work in finding companies that could provide the uniforms made to specifications of the BAFD. A committee was formed to gather information on what it would take to start the Honor Guard. A 12-member team was proposed -- one which could represent the Department in parades, funerals and other public events. The City approved the request and paid for the 12 uniforms.

There were 17 who responded to the opportunity to serve. A vote of all BAFD members selected 12 of those. Those members are Bush, Charles Misener, John Cockrell, David Meeks, Phil Reid, William Vaughn, Lee Moody, Jeremy Roberts, Ron Middleswart, Kirby Walker, K.C. Nickels and Robert Thomas.

"We are looking forward to making an impact on the department and the city we serve," said Bush.

If the need arises...

City Personnel Ready For Disaster Response

Cities which wait for a disaster to happen before preparing for a disaster are disasters waiting to happen.

Broken Arrow is not waiting.

Even before 9-11 Broken Arrow officials were putting in place plans to deal with a variety of "what ifs." The most recent of those plans is one being developed for response to biological terrorism at the local level.

On the last day of July, representatives from the City's police, fire and public works departments participated in a "tabletop" exercise that provided opportunities to see how those departments would work individually and cooperatively in a disaster situation.

That was one of the projects of the City's Emergency Response Review Team, which has been meeting regularly in an effort to put preparations in place for a wide variety of disaster situations...from a destructive tornado to a hazardous chemical spill to an attack by terrorists.

That team has developed procedures that include what to do if residents are without the ability to communicate by phone to handling attacks of terrorists at City water and wastewater facilities and even a giant Independence Day celebration.

An Emergency Operations Manual has been revised and distributed to City personnel. Police and fire officials have attended workshops dealing with disaster responses. An Awareness Training program was held for City employees, helping them recognize potential criminal activities (including meth labs) in the community. An assessment was made of each department's vulnerabilities. Three terrorism training programs were held in May.

This summer nine new sirens have been installed in areas of the city which previously had none or had "weak" spots. That brings to 42 the number of sirens located throughout the community, including newly annexed areas. The sirens are designed to alert those outdoors to impending danger from tornadoes or floods.

Officials of the City's police and fire departments have been working with other departments in the metropolitan area, as well as those on a national level.

"You can't wait for a disaster to happen before you put together a plan of action," said Branon Dodd, the City's Emergency Management Director. "You hope you never have to use that plan of action. But it's our commitment to our citizens that we'll be prepared to act professionally if the need arises."

The tabletop exercise was a prime example of the importance of cooperation in emergency situations. There were



Police Capt. Mike Clark works through a "disaster" scenario with members of the Public Works Department: (from left) Bruce Arnold, Jimmy Helms, Barney Campbell and Jerry Gates. The exercise was held at Tulsa Technology Center in Broken Arrow.

four scenarios presented to the 16 employees involved in the exercise -- ranging from an early-morning anonymous threat surrounding a Glory Daze celebration to sabotage at the City's wastewater treatment and water treatment plants and, finally, a small plane which crashed into the crowd, spreading a small pox virus.

Future exercises will be expanded to include actions away from the tabletop. "We're going to do everything we can to be prepared for what none of us wants," said Dodd.

New Sanitation Schedules Save City Money, Improve Morale

It's been one year since the City began a 4-day schedule for curbside pickups by Sanitation Department crews. And in that time alone, Public Works Director Dave Wooden estimates a savings of more than \$100,000 has already been achieved.

Up until July of 2001, the City had operated on a 6-day schedule. The 4-day schedule combines residents south of 91st on Tuesdays and Fridays, with residents north of that line having curbside service on Mondays and Thursdays. If a holiday falls on a Monday, pickups are pushed back to Tuesday and Wednesday. Otherwise, Wednesdays are used for truck maintenance.

Total trash hauled increased to 38,963 tons during the first 11 months of the 2001-2002 fiscal year -- an increase of more than 7 percent. Overtime pay in the Sanitation Department decreased by 75 percent and turnover in the division fell from 11 the previous year to only 5. There was a 12.6 decrease in equipment maintenance.

But Wooden points to some other benefits as being even bigger than the money saved. "Our customers are happier with the new system and our employee morale has improved dramatically. A system that was at its limits now has the capacity to expand."



Broken Arrow's Family Aquatic Center began revised hours in mid-August, but will remain open on weekends through Sept. 29. Once again this summer it's been a huge hit with area residents. And a record number of youngsters went through Learn to Swim programs at the old Central Pool.

Work Progresses on Jackson, Nienhuis Parks in BA

Two new park facilities are closer to becoming realities in Broken Arrow as work continues at Jackson Park (on Washington, east of Garnett) and Nienhuis Park (between 51st and 61st east of Lynn Lane). Plans are being finalized for the Community/Youth Center and Youth Football Complex at Nienhuis.

Streets Getting Bigger, Better

Growing pains are seldom more evident in a city the size of Broken Arrow than during road construction projects -- and the summer of 2002 has been full of growing pains in most sections of the city.

Because of legal problems with the contractor on two projects due to be completed last year (Aspen widening from Washington to New Orleans and New Orleans widening from Aspen to Elm), there are more orange barrels around town than had been anticipated.

Those projects are now being finished, and the widening of Elm from Houston to New Orleans will be finished by the end of the year. Work is also being done to widen Houston from Elm to Main and provide a traffic signal at Aspen-Detroit.

City of Broken Arrow

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Helpful Phone Numbers:

Animal Control259-8311
Citizens Action Center258-3587
Fire Department (Main office)259-8360
Parks & Recreation/Comm. Center ..259-8380
Public Works (all offices)259-8373
Seniors Center (at Main Place)259-8377
Sewer & Water Emergencies
7 a.m. to 4 p.m.259-8373
after hours259-8400
Police Department259-8350
TDD259-8452
Traffic Fines/Municipal Court259-8424
Utility Payments259-8409

Police, Fire or Ambulance Emergencies . . . 911

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